

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan Greenert Joint Press Availability Opening  
Statement and Response to Questions in Brazil  
January 16, 2013

ADM GREENERT: Thank you very much and thank you for joining us today members of the media and the press. I am very honored to be here once again to see my good friend Adm. Moura Neto in Brazil. We met four years ago and this is our third official meeting. I think our friendship represents, or is a good microcosm, of the friendship and the cooperation of our Navies and of our nations.

Our Navies and our Nations have served together since WWII, and today we serve together from the Caribbean to the Arabian Gulf. This has been a very fruitful visit and it's not over yet- We've been able to work through some memorandums of understanding for the exchange of our Navy liaison officers and for our personnel exchange for our officers to exchange billets here in Brazil and in the United States.

We've discussed submarine operations; we've discussed amphibious operations, tactical aviation and maritime security. I just close with, you can see that there's a broad area of operations and of topics that our two navies work together on. This visit has really emphasized the importance of my relationship with Adm. Moura Neto and our Navy, and I thank you very much for your time and I look forward to your questions.

REPORTER: My question is simple and straight forward. What is the level of importance you would give to the Brazilian Navy in the security in the South Atlantic?

ADM GREENERT: I would put my opinion, or my impression, of the Brazilian Navy at the very top - the government and the Brazilian Navy have the best vision for what the right security is in the Atlantic, and I would view them as the leader in that area.

REPORTER: I would like to ask ADM Greenert about which U.S. Navy programs could be affected by the proposed American defense budget cuts, and whether there is a possibility of transferring U.S. Navy war vessels to the Brazilian Navy.

ADM GREENERT: We have not yet had any budget cuts, but we have been in very close deliberations. But what I have to do, working with my Secretary of Defense and my Secretary of the Navy is balance the future Navy- the ships we will build for the future, the ships we have today. I have to be able to be sure that we are able to meet our strategic defense strategy and be present around the world where the American people ask us to be. Under riding all of that are people, we have to have the right number of people, they have to be organized and trained and we have to support their families. So depending on the direction I'm given and the strategy, the amount of money we have to fund our Navy we'll put forth the best Navy that money can buy, and that Navy will have to meet the attention of the people of the United States and the Defense Strategy.

REPORTER: <INAUDIBLE>... transfers?

ADM GREENERT: When we look to retiring ships or transferring them to a category of reduced operations we look toward our allies to see if there are any ships they would be interested in purchasing, and Adm. Moura Neto and I have been in deliberations on some ships. And again it will depend on which ships we will retire and what the interests are of the Brazilian Navy as we look ahead.

REPORTER: Good afternoon... I would like to get the Admiral's opinion about the Brazilian nuclear submarine program. What's your view on the issue? I hear you paid a visit to the shipyard.

ADM GREENERT: Thank you, I did visit (Aramar) yesterday and I visited the (Itaguaí) nuclear propulsion research and development and training and then construction sites. And I got a very thorough brief. I find it impressive, I find it innovative and I think that the Brazilian Navy, the Brazilian Defense establishment and the government is very forward looking as they look toward that. Difficult for me, I can't give you an opinion on the viability of that because it's different and I am not the expert on that. But as a military man I'm very impressed with the professionalism, the investment of people and time, and technology. And within the constraints I have with my the government on assistance and programs, Adm. Moura Neto and I have agreed that we will work together. We have lessons learned from when we established our nuclear submarine program.

Q. Good afternoon, gentlemen. My question is for ADM Greenert: in South America, especially in Brazil, there is still some difficulty in understanding the operational and political reasons leading to the creation or reactivation of the Fourth Fleet. What could you say about it? And how could the Brazilian Navy be inserted into this context?

ADM GREENERT: Well, the 4th fleet has been in commission now for five years, and I would characterize the commissioning of the Fourth fleet as a natural extension of our organization to provide theatre security operations in and around in the Caribbean and South America. The fourth fleet was commissioned only to provide cooperation with countries that are interested while respecting their desires and their sovereignty. I very much appreciate the Brazilian people, the Brazilian people and the Brazilian Navy for helping us explain that, for helping us show tangibly that the purpose of the fourth fleet is security cooperation. It has been our experience since the commissioning of the fourth fleet that we have it has been used as an instrument of cooperation, disaster assistance, humanitarian relief, and counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics. And operating in areas only where we have been requested or in areas that the fourth fleet has been requested and in cooperation with other nations.

Q. My question is for the U.S. Admiral: still on that Fourth Fleet topic, about which ADM Moura Neto has just spoken. We have examples of Brazilian ships, submarines and frigates, going to the U.S. for deployments and performing joint task force operations led by U.S. ships. Is there any possibility, or is the possibility being considered, of U.S. ships coming to Brazil for deployment, operating in our coast, with our Navy?

ADM GREENERT: I would submit that the possibility exists and it is really a function of the desire of the Brazilian government and the Brazilian Navy. But I would bring to your attention

both the Brazilian Navy and the U.S. Navy go both where they are needed and both agree it is in their best interest to operate together. The mission is usually maritime security and as I mentioned in my opening statement it involves discussions and operations in cooperation from the Arabian Gulf to where we discuss mine operations to piracy in the Gulf of Ayden, to the Caribbean to operate for maritime security. So I think that we would be interested, but we respect the wishes, desires, missions, and need of the Brazilian government and the Brazilian Navy.

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ADM GREENERT: If I could make one last point in that regard. Like I said we have operated with the Brazilian Navy since WWII. And we've operated together all around South America in exercise UNITAS. With the hospitality, grace and friendship of the Brazilian people, I'll have no shortage of volunteers in my Navy.